

2 November 1973
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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: TROUBLED ALLIANCE: Western Europe, the US,
and the Middle East Crisis

Note

This memorandum does not presume to prophesy the net outcome of the Middle East crisis or of the many issues in negotiation between Washington and its European allies. It does seek to summarize how the Europeans responded to the events in the Middle East and to explain why they acted--or failed to act--in the way that they did. Thereafter the discussion assesses this response in the perspective of their interests in the Middle East, in detente, and in the general atmosphere of the Atlantic relationship. The final section contains some tentative judgments about the short-term outlook in the aftermath of the crisis and the implications for the longer-haul--particularly for security and economic matters.

Precis

The rift between Western Europe and the US that has developed over the Middle East war is particularly serious because it occurs at a delicate point in Atlantic relations. Western Europe's differences with Washington over the handling of the crisis spring in part from Europe's growing dissatisfaction with US policy in the Arab-Israeli dispute. But these

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differences also have roots in specific economic, security, and political issues, and in the growing divergence between us over the fundamental purposes of the Alliance. That divergence has been made even more evident in recent months by the review of Atlantic relationships in the context of the Year of Europe.

Official Western European opinion over the past several years has become increasingly critical of Washington's alleged complacency over the need for an early Middle East settlement and its strong support of Israel's terms for negotiations with the Arabs. Although Israel has retained a measure of popular support in Western Europe since the 1967 war, responsible officials have displayed growing impatience with the Arab-Israeli impasse and concern over the accompanying threat to continued access to vital oil supplies. Some of the Allies, moreover, believe that US support for Israel has facilitated the extension of Soviet influence in the Middle East and has increased the hostility of radical Arab regimes to conservative Arab governments that are most friendly to the West. There is also an element of resentment against the predominant role played by the US and the USSR in an area which Western Europe has long viewed as its own "natural" sphere of influence.

The immediate cause of the rift, however, was the Western Europeans' conviction that the US had failed to consult them fully on its assessments and intentions, while at the same time it was negotiating with the Soviets to arrange the Security Council's cease-fire resolution. The allies also felt strongly that the US, having taken unilateral decisions, then tried to use NATO and detente to gain support for the US approach on matters outside the geographical area covered by the NATO treaty. Their concern was even more aroused by the US decision to alert its forces in Europe without prior consultation. The Allies are still without full understanding of the facts that led to this decision.

Even before these misunderstandings, the ongoing negotiations to devise a restatement of Atlantic principles had exposed the extent to which traditional European-US ties have weakened. A fundamental aspect of the current state of this relationship is Western Europe's desire to develop a stronger "European identity" and to maintain a certain distance from the US.

The familiar concepts of "interdependence," "partnership," and "Atlantic community" no longer evoke the same response on the Continent. These formulas, in fact, no longer command the support of many Europeans, because they have come to symbolize a one-way relationship, inequality, and European subservience to US interests.

Nothing, however, that has happened either in the current crisis or before alters certain realities central to the long haul in US-European relations. Resentful though it is, Europe is not prepared to go it alone. Unless things get very much out of hand, the main casualty is likely to be some illusions about the Alliance, but not the Alliance itself. To the Europeans, the North Atlantic Treaty still reflects the indivisibility of our common security, and the US presence provides the indispensable link to the US deterrent. NATO itself is still the mechanism for coordinating the defense contributions of the members, debating defense strategy, and consulting about common security concerns.

But the North Atlantic Treaty is not a European commitment to a global alliance. The Europeans are under no illusion that NATO provided them any voice in shaping US policies in Vietnam or even in the Middle East. They feel no obligation to underwrite policies they did not help to formulate. They do not believe that the determination of where Europe's broader interests lie should be determined solely by its special relationship with the US. And they consider NATO only one of the many institutions in which the US, Europe, and the rest of the free world must reach an accommodation on matters that unite and divide us.

In the period ahead in which the organization of a European union will remain incomplete, there will be the very practical problem of how to deal both with "Europe" and with its individual members. Certainly the larger countries and to a considerable extent even the smaller ones would be loathe to relinquish the opportunity to "talk directly" with Washington. On the other hand, on those matters that fall within the purview of the European Communities, the individual members can now make only limited commitments to the US. The EC's political consultation machinery is also gradually increasing its cognizance of foreign policy issues affecting Europe as a whole. In the security

area, the Eurogroup has taken on some importance as a mechanism for coordinating its members views on defense spending, arms procurement, and so on.

From our experience thus far in dealing with this developing Europe, no clear guidelines have emerged. The Europeans themselves are divided on what they should wish us to do; in some instances it has been advantageous to US interests that we have waited for a common European policy to emerge; in other instances, we have found it difficult to negotiate changes in European positions that were contrary to our interests.

In any event, the dominant note in Europe right now is ambivalence. Europeans are torn between imperatives of unity and imperatives of interdependence with the US. They are uncertain how committed the US remains to European unity. There is bound to be sharper attention to where the US and European interests parallel and where they diverge. If the process serves to clarify communication, there may be some compensations--however painful the strains will be.

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ANNEX B



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

S/S

October 31, 1973

SECRET

To: The Secretary

From: EUR - George S. Springsteen, Acting

Allied Response to the Middle Eastern Crisis

As you requested, this memorandum summarizes our high level consultations with the NATO Allies on the Middle East; their responses to actions we requested of them; and their public statements on the US role in the crisis.

I - Consultations

NATO

October 16

Rumsfeld informed the NAC that we took a serious view of Soviet airlift and regarded Soviet Middle East actions as a test of detente involving interests of all Allies

October 17 or
shortly
thereafter

In all NATO capitals, Ambassadors made demarches supporting Rumsfeld's October 16 statement

October 22

SecGen Luns and all Allies informed of text of US Security Council resolution, Ambassador Scali's statements, and the Secretary's trip to Israel.

October 26

Rumsfeld informed the NAC that we opposed the Soviet proposal for a joint US-Soviet policing of the ceasefire and that our forces had been placed on alert. He requested full Allied support for our position. Chairman of Military Committee also informed of alert.

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October 31 NATO informed in advance of Secretary's Middle East trip. In addition, Rumsfeld, on a periodic basis drew to the attention of the NAC press statements by US spokesmen and remarks by high US officials on the Middle East.

FRG

October 16 Informed of our resupply of Israel from FRG and of our general approach to developments (Hillenbrand-Scheel).

October 19 German Ambassador and Deputy Secretary discuss Rumsfeld statements in the NAC.

October 23,
25, 29, 30 Discussion of efforts to resupply Israel from US stocks in FRG and German desire we stand down such efforts (Hillenbrand-Frank).

October 26 Secretary tells German Ambassador of our distress over FRG withdrawing permission to resupply Israel from US stocks in Germany.

October 30 Stoessel and Hillenbrand discussed US-FRG differences on the Middle East with Foreign Minister.

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France

October 10 President Pompidou and Ambassador Irwin discuss general developments in Middle East,

October 11 Secretary and French Ambassador undertake general discussion of developments

October 17 In discussion with Sisco, French Ambassador receives general review of situation and US aims; informed we regard Soviet actions in the Middle East as test of detente

October 18 Springsteen (Acting) and French Ambassador discuss Jobert speech in National Assembly on Middle East

October 25 Secretary and French Ambassador discuss developments in Middle East

Italy

October 18 General discussion of developments (Porter-Ortona)

UK

October 22 Secretary briefs Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home on talks with Soviets, consultations with Israelis, and ceasefire proposal

Canada

October 17 US Ambassador discusses implications of Middle East crisis for NATO with Mitchell Sharp

Turkey

October 13 Delivery of note to GOT re KC-135 flights and reassurance against launching US operations from Turkey that would embroil Ankara in Arab-Israeli problems

October 15-16- Discussion of Middle East developments, including
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(Ambassador Macomber - Bayulken)

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Norway

October 18 Stoessel explains US intentions and requests Norwegian support in meeting Soviet threat, to detente shared by all Allies

Portugal

October 12-13 Messages to Lisbon asking Portugese support for Lajes flights, including one from President Nixon to Prime Minister Caetano

October 15 Expression of appreciation for Portugese cooperation on Lajes flights
(Secretary - Themido)

Belgium

October 10 Secretary and Foreign Minister exchange views on Middle East developments

October 18 Ambassador Strausz-Hupe called on Foreign Minister to discuss Middle East questions

October 19 Ambassador exchanged views with Davignon on Middle East

October 30 Ambassador reviews developments with Foreign Minister

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II. Responses by NATO Countries to Action Requests
 (Countries not asked to provide or offering support:
 Belgium, Denmark, Canada, France, Iceland, Luxembourg,
 Norway)

	<u>Request</u>	<u>Action</u>
FRG	To permit resupply of Israel from FRG.	Granted until ceasefire; asked end of shipments thereafter.
Greece	None	Made clear it did not want US facilities used.
Italy	To permit shipment of 8,000 blankets from US stocks in Italy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approved shipment of 8,000 blankets from US stockpiles in Italy. 2. Requested we not overfly or land, but permitted use of air space under Italian FIR control. 3. Made demarches in all Eastern European capitals (except Moscow) pointing out dangers to detente flowing from Middle East crisis, including expression of concern to Yugoslavs re Soviet overflights.
Netherlands	None	Raised no objection to US overflights from FRG.
Portugal	Use of Lajes	Granted.
Turkey	Informed Turkish government that tankers were picking up special fuel for use at another base (i.e., for intelligence flights).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Permitted Soviet overflights. 2. Refused use of US facilities to and from Middle East. 3. Tacitly acquiesced in tanker operation.
UK	Use of UK bases for intelligence flights.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised obstacles to use of UK bases by intelligence planes. 2. Refused to introduce ceasefire resolution. 3. Reluctant to support SC Resolution 340.

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III. Public Statements

Only four NATO Allies have issued statements specifically concerning the US role in the Middle East:

-- Italy: a government spokesman states October 27 that membership in NATO did not obligate Italy to assist the US in its Middle East policy.

-- FRG: the government press spokesman admitted the existence of FRG-US misunderstandings but denied that there is a crisis in relations over the Middle East. Foreign Minister Scheel insisted the FRG had acted as a loyal NATO member. Press spokesman von Wechmar said the government wished to do nothing to enlarge existing misunderstandings and, like Scheel, he made a plea for timely information and consultations.

-- Greece: Foreign Minister Palamas stated that Greece will not take any steps direct or indirect, that would lead to action against the Arab states.

Two other European countries have also made public statements:

-- Spain: government spokesmen have stated that under the US-Spanish base agreements the US is not entitled to use bases in Spain for situations such as the Middle East crisis; they also noted that the bases had not been and would not be used in this connection.

-- Austria: the government has stated it will not permit overflights by any country to the Middle East.